

DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE ORDINARY MEETING INCLUDING OF PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
held on THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2026 at 7:00PM
at The Spetchells Centre, Meeting Rooms 1 & 2 Front Street, Prudhoe, NE42 5AA

Present:

Cllr Jonathan Wheeler (Chair), Cllr Bryan Futers, Cllr Jane Johnson, Cllr Glenn Simpson, Cllr Mike Smith, Cllr Ignasious Varghese

Shirley Ann Gaut (Clerk)

Stephanie Kirby (Deputy Clerk)

County Cllr Lawrence O'Donnell (Prudhoe North & Wylam)

OM2526/138 Welcome by Chair

Meeting opened by Chair Cllr Jonathan Wheeler.

OM2526/139 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Chris Barrett, Cllr Kiran Bell, Cllr Dot Dickinson, Cllr Valerie Leslie, Cllr Bradley Lloyd, Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Angie Scott (and County Cllr Prudhoe West & Mickley), Cllr Carol Stephenson, Cllr Holly Waddell

County Cllr Gordon Stewart (Prudhoe South)

OM2526/140 Declarations of Interest

None received.

OM2526/141 Dispensations

None received.

OM2526/142 Public Participation

No items of public participation had been received.

OM2526/143 West Northumberland Food Bank

To receive an update from Sam Gilchrist from West Northumberland Food Bank regarding current level of service provision within Prudhoe. This update will provide members with an overview of the support being delivered locally, including recent activity, demand for services, and any emerging needs or challenges affecting residents who rely on the Food Bank.

OM2526/144 Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 22nd January 2026

It was **AGREED** to receive the minutes as a true record.

OM2526/145 Draft Minutes of Cemetery and War Memorial Committee Meeting held 12th February 2026

It was **AGREED** to receive draft minutes which will be presented for agreement as a true record, at the next Cemetery and War Memorial Committee meeting.

OM2526/146 Reports

a) Chair's Report

Cllr Jonathan Wheeler gave the following report:-

I have attended a number of meetings: -

A Borderlands meeting, at which an update was provided on the progress of current projects.

On 4th February, the Clerk and I met with Russ Greig of the Miners Lamp Café and Community Hub to receive an update on ongoing projects and to discuss collaborative working arrangements in relation to the Prudhoe Town Show. This included linking activities with Prudhoe in Bloom and exploring the potential for extended events following the Miners Race.

The Cemetery and War Memorial Committee meeting held on 12th February.

A Heritage Group meeting on 25th February, attended by Councillor Mike Smith, Russ Greig and myself.

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On 23rd February 2026, I met with Councillor Angie Scott, the Clerk, Eddie Graham and Caroline Richardson to discuss matters relating to Old Edgewell Cemetery and the commemoration of war graves.

I will also be attending the first anniversary of the Prudhoe Veterans' Club on 14th March 2026.

b) Clerk's Report

The Clerk gave the following verbal report:-

Prudhoe Town Football Club

We have confirmation that the Committee has agreed to the revised rental fee of £1,482 for Essity Park.

This figure represents a 4% increase year on year over the five-year rent review period. The new rental rate will take effect from April 2026 and will remain in place until April 2031.

In addition Cllr Wheeler noted that a tender opportunity had been published regarding the design and installation of a memorial garden in Edgewell Old Cemetery.

c) County Cllrs Reports

County Cllr Lawrence O'Donnell (Prudhoe North & Wylam)

- I'm encouraging as many people to respond to NCC's Library consultation. The proposals to reduce Prudhoe's opening hours are very disappointing.
- I've been assured by Highways that plans to improve Castlefields Drive chicanes are allocated for 2027-28 (design and consultation) and 2028-29 (construction) subject to being signed off by the Cabinet member for Highways.
- The interactive speed sign paid for by the Members Local Improvement Scheme has been installed on Castlefields Drive. Thank you to Prudhoe Town Council for agreeing to take on the asset and maintenance.
- Parking in Castlefields continues to cause problems, I have asked for letters to be sent to some houses to make sure lorries are unobstructed on bin collection days.
- I met with businesses affected by parking issues in Low Prudhoe. I have asked Advance Northumberland to review their parking layout in Duke's Court to create spaces and alleviate the problem.
- I met with Cash Access representatives to discuss their plans for a temporary banking hub in Prudhoe.
- I met with the Highways area manager to once again ask for work to be carried out to Broomhouse Lane.
- I have been discussing problems with the spring on Broomhouse Lane with the Lead Local Flood Authority Officer at NCC.
- I met with Officers responsible for public transport at NCC to discuss bus service improvements. A consultation on the 686 service will be starting soon with a view to expanding the timetable.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart (Prudhoe South)

Highfield proposed development

25/01971/FUL

Land To East of School Highfield Lane Prudhoe Northumberland

It is anticipated that this application will go before a committee.

Coop Car Park - Restrictions

The Coop HQ team have not provided any update this year re their intentions, and no update is expected in the near future.

West Wylam Bus Services

New poles & flags are being installed.

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Banking Hub

Cash Access UK are looking to provide a service in Prudhoe within the next few months.
<https://www.cashaccess.co.uk/hubs/>

Credit Union

Discussions regarding a Credit union having a presence in Prudhoe are continuing.

Winter Services

A long cold & wet spell, Thanks to the NCC teams for doing a great job.

Neighbourhood Plan

Major changes to planning are expected, PTC may wish to accelerate the process if practicable.

The Government has indicated its wish to encourage house building close to main line railway stations, this may alert developers to Prudhoe.

Prudhoe Hall & Prudhoe Walled Gardens

I remain in contact with Gentoo regarding options.

Vehicle Speeding Perceptions.

The reports are now occasional, the most regular being in the Moor Road area, I have a meeting arranged with an employer to seek their support in addressing the concerns.

Cottier Grange, the roads are not adopted. The Police have no ability to deal with enforcement.

The speed limit when adopted will default to 30mpn, unless requested otherwise, the signage erected by Gentoo stating 20mph has been placed to reassure residents.

Other measures will be reintroduced by the developer. I remain in contact with them.

Humbles Wood Estate.

Concerns re parking on the estate, discussions are continuing.

The estate has not been adopted; I await an update on the position.

Grass Parking

This is becoming a real issue (not just Prudhoe) letters have been sent by a social housing provider to residents in some areas, this will be extended to other areas.

NCC Annual Budget Meeting.

The budget received cross party support.

NCC Library Consultation

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/shaping-future-northumberland-libraries/about-our-libraries-consultation>

Borderlands - East Centre

Costings and a planning application are expected to be submitted by the PCP.

Front Street Area Parking - Following Consultation

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/roads-and-streets/traffic-management-orders-proposals-and-consultations/traffic-regulation-orders>

Woodside - Footpaths

NCC teams are expected to replace the flagstones with tarmac next week, a query has arisen and I am working with NCC officers and residents.

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County Cllr Angie Scott (Prudhoe West & Mickley)

I have been encouraging residents to complete the consultation regarding our libraries in the Prudhoe and surrounding areas. It is important to remind residents that the consultation does not have to be completed online - paper copies are available in the libraries.

Staff from Northumberland County Council (NCC) will be present at Prudhoe Library on the afternoon of 19th March to support residents and answer any questions.

The dropped kerbs on Edgewell Bank are now nearly complete.

I have been working with residents who have raised concerns regarding Karbon Homes and will continue to liaise as needed.

Running water on the A695 has been reported to the relevant department.

I have continually reported concerns regarding the condition of the road at Mount Pleasant to NCC officers and have requested that Northumberland County Council respond directly to residents in that particular area.

I have also requested a site meeting with NCC officers to discuss areas of concern raised by residents outside local schools.

OM2526/147 Financial Update

To receive reports and raise any questions.

a) Schedule of Accounts Paid/To be Paid

It was AGREED to endorse those accounts paid via delegated authority and approve those accounts to be paid since 22nd January 2026.

b) Bank Statement

It was AGREED to receive the Bank Reconciliation dated 9 February 2026.

c) Statement of Budget and Expenditure

It was AGREED to receive statement to date.

OM2526/148 Community Governance Review 2026, Stage One Public Consultation Questionnaire, Parish, Town and Community Councils of Northumberland County Council

It was AGREED to receive and submit the formal response for the Community Governance Review 2026, Stage One Public Consultation Questionnaire, Parish, Town and Community Councils of Northumberland County Council via the Council's online consultation portal, before the deadline of 30 April 2026.

OM2526/149 Local Housing Needs Assessment Prudhoe & Neighbouring Parishes, Northumberland

It was AGREED to receive the Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) being prepared by arc4 Ltd on behalf of SCATA Limited, which is intended to provide a robust and credible evidence base to inform policy development and to deliver a comprehensive assessment of future housing needs within the area.

It was AGREED that the item be deferred to the meeting of the Planning, Contract and Works Committee scheduled for Thursday, 12th March 2026.

It was considered that further information was required, and it was noted that the Clerk would contact arc4 accordingly.

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OM2526/150 Reports from Outside Bodies

It was **AGREED** to receive following reports and record any questions for response:-:-

OUTSIDE BODY	CURRENT PTC REPRESENTATIVE(S) 2025-2026
Prudhoe Town Twinning Association	Cllr Chris Barrett & Cllr Jane Johnson
Prudhoe Community Partnership (3 rd Tuesday of the month, bi-monthly)	Cllr Dot Dickinson
Northumberland Association of Local Councils County Committee	Cllr Dot Dickinson & Cllr Holly Waddell
East Tynedale Local Council's Forum	Cllr Holly Waddell & Cllr Jonathan Wheeler
Essity Community Consultation Forum (lunchtime meetings at the Mill, when permitted)	Cllr Bryan Futers & Cllr Dot Dickinson
Prudhoe Pathforce	Cllr Angie Scott & Cllr Carol Stephenson
NCC Town and Parish Council Liaison Working Group	Cllr Holly Waddell
Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership	Cllr Holly Waddell & Cllr Gerry Price
Prudhoe Youth Project (PYP) (previously met monthly on a Monday evening)	Cllr Dot Dickinson & Cllr Gerry Price
Borderlands	Cllr Bryan Futers & Cllr Mike Smith
Tyne Valley Parish Council Active Travel Route	Cllr Chris Barrett & Cllr Jonathan Wheeler
Prudhoe Community Partnership Working Group	Cllr Dot Dickinson, Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Mike Smith & Cllr Jonathan Wheeler
Climate Change and Biodiversity	Cllr Dot Dickinson, Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Scott, Cllr Carol Stephenson & Cllr Jonathan Wheeler
East Centre Advisory Group	Cllr Kiran Bell & Cllr Dot Dickinson
Trustee Friends of Eastwood Park	Cllr Jane Johnson
Poverty Coalition	Cllr Valerie Leslie

- a) Promoting Prudhoe Project meeting 29/01/2026 – circulated 26/01/2026
- b) Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership News – circulated 02/02/2026
- c) The East Advisory Group meeting 10/02/2026 – circulated 03/02/2026
- d) Borderlands Front Street and Retail update – circulated 17/02/2026
- e) Borderlands The East and The Glade plans – circulated 17/02/2026
- f) The Glade Development Information Month – circulated 17/02/2026
- g) NCC Town and Parish Liaison Working Group presentations and links received for meeting held 22/01/2026 - circulated 18/02/2026
- h) Prudhoe Goes Green meeting minutes meeting held 22/01/2026 – circulated 20/02/2026
- i) PCP/PTC English Heritage re Prudhoe Castle – circulated 17/02/2026

OM2526/151 Correspondence

- a) It was **AGREED** to receive the following correspondence:-
- b) NALC update January – circulated 20/01/2026
- c) Tynedale Community Partnership -meeting 27 January 2026 - circulated 21/01/2026
- d) NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin – circulated 22/01/2026, 29/01/2026, 05/02/2026, 12/02/2026
- e) Thriving Together Newsletter January – circulated 30/01/2026
- f) NALC Events – circulated 05/02/2026, 18/02/2026

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- h) Parking in Prudhoe Town Centre – circulated 17/02/2026
- i) Energy Resilience Grant Round 7 Expressions of Interest are Open - circulated 18/02/2026
- j) NCC Net Zero Funding for your community projects - circulated 18/02/2026
- k) Electrical Safety campaign – circulated 18/02/2026
- l) Help shape the future of Northumberland Libraries - circulated 18/02/2026

OM2526/152 Date of Next Meeting

It was AGREED that the next Ordinary Meeting will be held on Thursday 26th March 2026.

OM2526153 Exclusion of the press and public

It was AGREED to approve a motion to invoke Standing Order 3d) to exclude the press and public, for the remainder of the meeting, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, permitted under Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, paragraph 3, that they relate to contractor's quotes.

OM2526/154 Prudhoe Town Council Website

It was AGREED to receive and consider quotes for the creation of a new, up-to-date website that meets current standards and compliance requirements, including any necessary updates to content, functionality, and accessibility.

Contractor	Net Cost
A	£7,500.00
B	£3499
	£396
C	£560 annually
D	First year to set up £899 + any additional
	Second year renewal £399 + any additional

It was AGREED to award the contract to Contractor D, Aubergine.

It was noted that further clarification and refinement of the requirements would be necessary to ensure that the scope of works is clearly defined and that expectations are fully aligned. It was further acknowledged that this process would assist in confirming deliverables, timescales, and any specific technical or operational considerations prior to implementation.

Meeting ended 8.12pm.